

GENERAL NOTES.

The Fishing Plunge of the Brown Pelican.—While engaged in an investigation of the muskrat in the coastal region of Louisiana during the years 1925–1927, I had many opportunities of observing the fishing plunge of the Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis occidentalis*). Many writers have mentioned these plunges but very few analytical descriptions have been published.

Nichols (1918) described the observations of Dr. Russell J. Coles who noted the plunges of the Brown Pelican in Florida as follows: "When these birds are feeding, the distance of their flight above the surface of the water is carefully regulated by the depth at which the fish are swimming I have often seen a Brown Pelican suddenly dart forward and upward ten to fifteen feet higher and circle back over his prey before making his plunge, indicating that the fish was swimming at a greater depth than expected." From this one may get the impression that the circle before the plunge occurs only when the Pelican has underestimated the depth of its prey. Quoting further, "The plunge is interesting in that it is always made headed down wind" (italics mine). From this point on until the bird strikes the water, the plunge is very accurately described. Nichols continues, "It is necessary for such a heavy bird to rise against the wind, therefore, it is only a case of instinctive preparedness that the Brown Pelican always rises to the surface headed up-wind, in order to be ready for instant flight."

Bent (1922) who quotes these notes of Nichols, comments on this description as follows: "Thus, by entering the water down-wind and emerging from it up-wind, the Pelican makes a complete turnover or turnabout under water; many writers have referred to this, and almost every observer has noticed it."

My observations are somewhat at variance with the preceding notes, for I have never seen the Brown Pelican plunge into the water headed down-wind or make a turnover or turnabout under water. The ordinary flight of the Pelican is into the wind whenever any breeze is blowing. When about to plunge, the bird makes a complete circle of 180 degrees so that it strikes the water headed up-wind. Upon coming to the surface of the water with its prey, the Pelican is still headed up-wind. Thus, it is in position to receive the wind on the under surfaces of its wings and so rise from the water to continue its flight. This, with the characteristic circling, is the normal plunge of the Brown Pelican as I have observed it in Louisiana.—ARTHUR SVIHLA, *State College, Pullman, Wash.*

Occurrence of the Barrow's Golden-eye and (Greater?) Snow Geese in Berkshire County, Massachusetts.—Late in the afternoon of April 15, 1931, I was driving on the dirt road bordering the Housatonic River, in Lenox, accompanied by John F. Treadway, of Williamstown. We skirted the rather spacious stretch of water back of the Lenox depot,

when the sight of a Duck within 150 feet of the shore attracted our attention. To our amazement the bird proved to be a drake Barrow's Golden-eye (*Clangula islandica*). Previous acquaintance with this species on the north shore of Boston enabled me to identify the bird readily, and to appreciate the rarity of its occurrence. Only once before, according to Mr. Forbush (Birds of Massachusetts, etc.) has this Golden-eye been recorded from the interior of Massachusetts.

To my present knowledge, there exist no Snow Geese records for this section of the state. The following observation, which was also shared by J. F. Treadway, took place at 10.10 A.M. on April 13, 1931, at the Pleasant Valley Bird and Wild Flower Sanctuary in Lenox. We were favored with exceptionally fine weather conditions. Far to the south a medley of shrill Geese honks broke the stillness of the morning, when presently, high overhead, appeared two long, loose lines of snow-white birds, with black wing-tips showing plainly as they sped straight northwards across the pale blue of the sun-washed sky. At least 300 birds composed this wonderfully impressive picture.

Of course there is doubt left as to their exact identity, but those who are familiar with the distribution and migration routes of both the Lesser and Greater Snow Geese would suppose that in all probability these birds were the Greater (*Chen hyperboreus nivalis*).—MAURICE BROWN, Lenox, Mass.

Total Albinism in the Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*).—Through the kindness of Mr. Clarence E. Chapman of New York, the owner of Mulberry Plantation, Berkeley County, S. C., the writer is able to record an instance of total albinism in a male specimen of *Anas platyrhynchos*. The Duck was presented to the undersigned by Mr. Chapman and is a beautiful example, being in perfect condition, fat and healthy. The color of the eyes was somewhat at variance with the few total albino birds seen by the writer in the past, having a rather deep reddish hue instead of pink. Every feather on the bird, however, was snowy white not a tinge of color being present. The feet and legs are of the same color as those of a bird in normal plumage.

One other totally albinistic Mallard was taken during the past open season on the Cooper River, Berkeley County, S. C. by Mr. G. D. B. Bonbright of Pimlico Plantation. An albino Black Duck (*Anas rubripes tristis*) was reported to the writer by Mr. Adolph Nimitz of Charleston, S. C., who saw the bird in company with other Black Ducks on the upper Cooper River, S. C., but failed to secure it.

It seems strange that three totally albinistic Ducks should occur in a rather restricted locality, all within a month or so of each other, when so many years pass without one being seen.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., 92 South Battery, Charleston, S. C.

Cinnamon Teal in Michigan.—**A Correction**—The bird referred to in 'The Auk,' 1931, p. 109, has been examined by Dr. H. C. Oberholser